

CONFESSING CHRIST TODAY', IN ORTHODOX THEOLOGY

Reports of Groups at a Consultation of Orthodox Theologians on 'Confessing Christ Today', held in Bucharest, June 1974.

The following material is of a special character since it is composed of the reports of the working groups of a consultation of 30 Orthodox participants from East and West, including also a number of non-Chalcedonian Oriental Orthodox.

The convocation of this conference was initiated by the Committee of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism and was intended to give Orthodox theologians a chance to contribute to the ongoing preparation for the topic of Section I: 'Confessing Christ Today'. The Consultation took place at the Monastery of Cernica (near Bucharest) from 4-8 June 1974.

The reports of the four working groups give some indication of the great interest this topic has for the Orthodox Churches today. These four reports show the affirmation of Orthodox positions, but at the same time they betray the very strong desire of the participants at Cernica to become more open to the outside world in a spirit of humility and disposition to serve. It is to be noted that in the act of confessing the Orthodox begin with the theology of the Logos and move toward a commentary on their personal participation through the Church Community in His Grace as the incarnate Son of God and in the power of the Holy Spirit. On this very solid basis however the Orthodox do not behave as if they possess the truth which therefore should be propagated or imposed on the non-believers through absolute principles and dogmatic scholastic formulations. Report No. 1 speaks of the need for humility and 'tenderness' of Christians towards all men. It is also interesting for readers of Reports No. 2 and 3 to notice the Orthodox attitude that the Eucharist should not be used as a tool for confessing Christ or as an instrument for mission, but as the focal event of the church community, and as such must be seen as the springboard, the starting event of Christians for confessing Christ in today's world. This is due to the fact that for the Orthodox the church community contains a moment of affirmation of the reality of being in Christ, 'enjoying' faith in a distinctive celebrating community in and for the whole world. On this basis Report No. 4 builds the idea of the evangelistic task of the Church in the modern world.

Another element which comes to the fore in the Report of Group No. 2 (an element which is highly disputed in contemporary theology) is: is history building the Kingdom of God or is the Kingdom erupting into history as an antithesis to it? Certainly the Orthodox position would be closer to the latter approach but this item was almost violently disputed during the latter part of the consultation. On this main issue the Orthodox represent a variety of approaches but they would all agree that there is a point of departure which is given to the Church as a pivot of historical reality and a eucharistic community, and through this alone the Kingdom of God can be expected and grasped. This attitude, however, does not separate Church and world, holy and profane, sacred and secular, due to the very strong emphasis of the Orthodox, through the Logos theology, on the cosmic dimension of the salvation in Christ and the all renewing operation of the Holy Spirit.

It should be stressed that the four reports published here are only group working papers, and as such do not express the general agreement of all the participants at the Consultation.

--N. A. Nissiotis

Chairman of the Consultation

Report No. 1: The Centrality of Christ in Orthodox Theology.

1. The centrality of Christ in the life of the Church is linked to the topic 'Confessing Christ Today'. In our faith, Christ occupies the central place in the act of confessing, for He is the dynamic factor in the Christian confession in the world. Following the biblical and the kerygmatic tradition of the Church, we confess the incarnation of the Logos of God, Father and mediator through the work of the Paraclete--for the regeneration of man and the restoration of his communion with God--in the divine-human person of Christ. Thus the Logos of God is not only Saviour but also Creator. He is our centre in a double sense: as divine Logos, source and model of our reason and initiating partner of our dialogue with Him. While being the divine-human hypostasis, the centre of everybody and everything, He is the partner and the creative and generative source of the dialogue with Him and among men. He is the Logos of all things and the Logos is the image of the Father. The world has an ontological basis in God, because all things are linked to the Logos. They represent the diversification of the reason of the Logos. At the same time their link and their unity in a harmonious whole is grounded in the non-differentiated unity of the personal Logos. While the things are material, tangible and intelligible images of the diversified reasons and thoughts of the Logos, the human being is the image of the Logos itself as a person who thinks.
2. In order to establish the communion between God and man, broken because of the Fall in its cosmic dimension, the Logos, in his capacity as a person, has introduced himself more intimately in the creation and in human history. He is incarnate through the Holy Spirit. Through His incarnation He has revealed the meaning of things, He has restored the bond with man, and has renewed the human being. In Christ we find not only the Reason as the source of our common human reason, but our total being is lifted up to the image of God through participation in the Spirit. Through the same act the Logos has established a new relationship, between the Creator and man, an ontological relationship, dynamic not static, which is created and perfected through the energies of God, effected by the Holy Spirit. By restoring the human being to his function the incarnate Logos communicates to man the power to liberate himself from his egoism, in order to understand the others and to enter into communion with them and with Him. This is the interpersonal function of the Logos. Christ is thus man par excellence, the centre of creation, the central man who relates to all. He calls us to make humanity understand that it should not be content with its insufficient rationality, and to help people to find the personal origin of reason which is to be found precisely in Christ.
3. In spite of the humanization of the Logos, man is still free to refuse the communion with God. Hence also the presence of sin and evil which has a real existence and which is opposed to the regenerative work of the Logos. Evil is at the root of the divisions and the passions which have separated men. But the incarnate Logos who effectively unites men establishes in the Holy Spirit the communion in the Church which is the body of Christ. The Church realizes the unifying message of divine Logos, for the Logos is her centre and therefore the unifying basis for the entire humanity. Christ being not only the Creator but the Saviour does not require of us a uniform act of confession, for He is the centre of the diversity of forms. Each people, each nation, each culture puts its own genius at the service of the Church which preaches and confesses Christ for the sake of mutual enrichment and of the gathering of all people in the pan-human family. We

personally encounter Christ in the eucharistic communion, but his creative presence extends to the whole cosmos and leads all of history towards fulfilment in Him.

4. This dynamic presence of the Logos as the ecclesial communion in the world means that history is of unique value for all who confess Christ. It implies that the Church exists in terms of confessing the centrality of the Logos in all of creation. The act of confession does, therefore, not signify an attitude of domination by a system or an ideology which possesses the abstract principles of truth, but it manifests the Truth of Christ as the personal pivot of history. Through the regeneration in Christ which implies a dynamic process of spiritual transformation in the power of the Holy Spirit Christians are helped to liberate themselves from the slavery of passions and are open for communion with God and all fellow people. For it is impossible to speak of a person without communion with others. The process leading towards this communion with God and with all people has always a communal character. The Holy Spirit sensitizes us for the union among Christians and between Christians and others. It is the Holy Spirit who penetrates the material strata and who opens for us the perspective to God, and the mystery of the brother. This also signifies a sensitivity to hear the appeal to discover the Logos in those who suffer and are oppressed. Through this regeneration and through a tenderness Christians, following Christ's example, realise the existential kenosis as it has been manifested by the incarnate Logos, in order that they can encounter the other in his human condition. On the basis of the cosmic presence of the Logos we are called to make our contribution to the development and the progress of the world. This supposes on our part a capacity to discern the signs of history, in order to be able to decipher them and to interpret them in terms of God's will.

5. More than ever the world requires of us to be a confessing Church. We confess the faith of the apostles which continues until today. The centrality of Christ is the ecclesial life which is not locked into rational definitions and forms. The Church continues to confess through her total allegiance to the humiliated and glorified Logos. Confessing Christ today means for us to call all people to become sensitive to the work of the Holy Spirit in the entire world in order that all may become conformed to the image of the Incarnate Word in the resemblance of God.

6. Everything will be fully revealed and realized in the Eschaton; meanwhile the Church already participates in it through the first-fruits of the Holy Spirit. She, therefore, confesses this eschaton to be open through the Logos in the first-fruits of the Spirit which are the source and power for advancing the whole of humanity towards the coming Kingdom and for giving to the world a joyful hope of authentic and eternal life which follows the sacrifice of the Cross.

Report No. 2: Unity and Mission

I. Theology and Mission

1. The mission of the Church is based on Christ's mission. A proper understanding of this mission requires, in the first place, an application of Trinitarian Theology. Christ's sending of the Apostles is rooted in the fact that Christ Himself is sent by the Father in the Holy Spirit (John 20: 21-23). The significance of this scriptural assertion for the concept of Mission is commonly recognized but the Trinitarian Theology which is implied in it deserves more attention than it normally receives.

Trinitarian Theology points to the fact that God is in Himself a life of communion and that His involvement in history aims at drawing man and creation in general into this communion with God's very life. The implications of this assertion for understanding Mission are very important: Mission does not primarily aim at the propagation or transmission of intellectual convictions, doctrines, moral commands etc. but at the transmission of the life of communion which exists in God. The 'sending' of mission is essentially the sending of the Spirit (John 14:26), who manifests precisely the life of God as communion (II Cor. 13: 13).

2. Christ is sent into the world not as teacher, example etc. but as a bearer of this divine life which aims at drawing the world into the way of existence which is to be found in the Trinity. The understanding of Christ as the Logos of God in the Early Church served at that time to illustrate two things which are significant for Mission. On the one hand it meant that Christ as the Logos, eternally existing in God as one of the Trinity is sent to the world as a bearer of the Trinitarian life and not as a separate individual. On the other hand, it meant that as the cosmic Logos, the power which sustains the world, Christ was sent for no lesser purpose than bringing the world into the life of God. The mission of Christ is, therefore, essentially the self-giving of the Trinity so that the world may become a participant in divine life.

3. This mission of Christ takes place in a 'fallen' world and is met with the resistance of 'the powers and principalities' of evil and sin. This has made the Cross the inevitable passage of Christ's mission. Mission, therefore, takes place in the context of struggle and implies a conversion, a paschal and baptismal passage of the world into a 'new creation'. This is not a fight that manifests itself simply in the souls of individuals; it permeates the entire social life through injustice, oppression, etc. and even the whole of natural existence through sickness and death.

4. While the reality of the Cross represents the inevitable context of mission as a clash between the Trinitarian way of existence and the 'power and principalities' of sin, the Resurrection of Christ throws light on Mission in two fundamental ways. In the first place it points to the fact that the outcome of Mission is beyond any doubt the defeat of the powers of sin both in its social and natural implications (overcoming of death). Christ's ascension and constant intercession at the right hand of God sustains this assurance. Equally, however, it points to the fact that this outcome of Mission is not controlled by historical forces but is eschatological in nature. It is the Spirit of God that raised Christ from the dead (Rom. 8:10). The Church's mission cannot build up or bring about the Kingdom. It can only announce its coming through the kerygma of the Resurrection and point to it in a sacramental way. Mission can lead to a taste of the Kingdom, not to its construction through social and historical material.

II. Church and Mission

1. If Christ's Mission brings about essentially nothing less than the self-giving of God's Trinitarian life to the world, it follows that mission is ultimately possible only in and through an event of communion which reflects in history the Trinitarian existence of God Himself. The Church is meant precisely to be that. Mission, therefore, suffers and is seriously distorted or disappears whenever it is not possible to point to a community in history which reflects this Trinitarian existence of communion. This happens

whenever the Church is so distorted or divided that it is no longer possible to recognize it as such a communion, or whenever Mission is exercised without reference to the Church, but with reference simply to the individuals or the social realities of history. Ecclesiological heresy, therefore, renders Mission impossible or distorted.

2. If we place Mission in this broader perspective, it becomes evident that Mission is not to be related exclusively to the 'apostolicity' but to all the 'notae' of the Church, including unity, holiness and catholicity. This affects the concept of Mission in a decisive way, since it removes it from the realm of quantity to become a qualitative reality; it is not the number of 'converts' or the statistical membership of the Church that can point to the existence of Mission; the holiness, unity and catholicity (which is not to be confused with geographical expansion and universality) determine the notion of Mission more than any success in numbers.

3. This ecclesiological perspective implies that Mission is ultimately concerned with pointing to a quality of existence which reflects that of the Trinity. It is at this point that a great deal of overlapping between the actual anthropological and sociological concerns of our time and those of the Church's takes place or appears to do so. The Church's Mission aims at overcoming the divisions which prevail in the social and natural world by pointing to the event of communion which God offers to the world as the Body of Christ, the Church. The specificity, however, of the Church's Mission must never be lost sight of. It lies in the following main areas: (a) Social transformation does justice to the Church's mission provided that it respects fully man as a person, his freedom and his uniqueness; (b) Social transformation can make sense ultimately if the entire natural cosmos is transformed and death is abolished; and (c) Preoccupation with the actual problems of human existence and the struggle for social justice constitute part of the 'narrow gate' to the Kingdom of God, but the historical process cannot produce or bring about this Kingdom.

4. If that is the case, to what reality can the Church's mission point in order to offer the 'taste' of the communion which it announces? There is only one possibility in history and this is the Eucharistic Community and, in so far as it is determined by it, the Church in its canonical structure as a whole.

III. Mission, as described above, belongs to the very nature of the Church, whatever the conditions of its life. However, throughout its history, the Orthodox Church was also involved in more specific missionary work, preaching the word of God among nations which never heard it. We want to point particularly to two aspects characterizing the traditional Orthodox approach to missions and which are particularly relevant to our situation today.

a) Orthodox missions have often succeeded when they were conducted not as an organized endeavour, planned and supported from abroad, but as a spontaneous and personal witness of Christian life, holiness and communion with divine life. Sometimes such a witness was carried by laymen or women (St. Nina in Georgia, St. Frumentios in Ethiopia). In other cases, the monastic communities brought to non-Christian societies such authentic models of common life in Christ, prayers, toil and service, that their mere presence was sufficient to make the Christian message accepted and understood (the monasteries of Northern Russia).

b) Whether systematically planned or spontaneously improvised, Orthodox missions were generally based on the attempt of making scripture and liturgy immediately acceptable to the new Christians, by having them translated into their native tongue and by having a native clergy assume leadership in the 'young churches'. The greatest historical instance of that approach is that of St. Cyril and Methodius in their mission among the Slavs. Their example was followed up to the modern times (St. Nicolas of Japan). However, in the examples mentioned above, indigenization was never seen as an end in itself; concern was also given to cultural continuity between the Mother Church and her daughter churches (liturgy, art, music, etc.) which preserved the sense of the universal unity of the Church.

While recognizing the achievements of these traditional Orthodox approaches to mission, and thanking God for His almighty grace, we must also admit that especially in modern times, the mission and witness of the Orthodox Church in the modern world has been hampered by a weakening of the sense of unity between the local autocephalous Orthodox Churches. There was a tendency to lose the sense that unity and mission are inseparable, that the divine love and unity cannot be convincingly preached by those who do not adopt as the standard for their own lives. Thus, especially in those countries where Orthodox communities have a relatively recent history (eg. America, Western Europe, Australia), there are territorial overlapping jurisdictions and a tendency, by autocephalous Churches to be motivated in their policies and action by nationalism, which belongs to the 'fallen world'. The mission of the Orthodox Church and its witness to the world suffers greatly from these inconsistencies and conflicts. They must be urgently solved by a common accord of all the Orthodox Churches.

The recovery of a sense of mission, of a responsibility, not only for our own communities, but for Christ's redeeming act, which involves the whole world, must be urgently recovered. As in a mirror, we must discover our shortcomings when we contemplate today's world, which is in need of witness of Christ's Resurrection and awaits the revelation, through the Church, of the mystery of Trinitarian unity. 'Let us love one another that in one accord we may confess the Father, the Son and the Holy Trinity, Trinity consubstantial and undivided'.

Report No. 3: Confessing Christ today through Liturgy

1. Significant aspects of the Liturgy

The Eucharistic Liturgy is the full participation of the faithful in the salvation brought about by the incarnation of the Divine Logos, and through them into the whole Cosmos. By the mutual self-givingness and the self-offering of Christ and of His people, by sanctification of the Bread and Wine and the 'Christification' of the communicants, it is the place where we experience the fullness of salvation, the communion of the Holy Spirit Heaven on earth. Through the humble and 'kenotic' hiding of the Divine Word in the mystery of the Bread, offered, broken, and given, 'we proclaim His death and confess His Resurrection until He comes again'.

Thus by the growing power of the Holy Spirit His repentant and forgiven people are in the mystery of the Cross and the Resurrection. Suffering and joy thus become inseparable to the confessing of Christ: a joyful suffering because it leads to the victory over Evil.

The Beauty of the Liturgy educates our hearts and our eyes to the contemplation of the uncreated light of the Holy Trinity in its heavenly Glory. But if the Glory of the Cross and the Divine Beauty of the Liturgy do not transfigure our own sinful ugliness into real internal Beauty our participation in the Liturgy leads to our judgement and condemnation.

2. Church and world

The Liturgy is our thanksgiving for--and on behalf of--the created world; and the restoration in Christ of the fallen world. It is the image of the Kingdom; it is the Cosmos becoming Ecclesia.

Though the Eucharist is the most perfect access to the economy of salvation, it is rather the goal--and also the spring-board--of Mission, than the means of Mission.

The Eucharist should reveal the iconic function of the Church.

The Church, as an institution points to the Eucharistic Assembly as her sole genuine image, as the transparent icon of Christ.

Though the Eucharist is only for the Assembly of the faithful, for their sanctification, non-Eucharistic liturgical expressions, non-Eucharistic liturgical prayers, liturgical Bible-reading, icons, hymnology etc. can and should be also used for proclaiming the Gospel and confessing Christ to the world. New forms of catechetical offices should be explored in relation to needs of the mass-media (broadcasting, television, etc.) of the modern world. Matins and Vespers, as well as the liturgy of the Catechumens can give a framework for the Church in new creations in this field.

Nevertheless, our own availability to the Gospel, and our opening to the Spirit through the Communion of the Divine Body and Blood, our own sanctification, remain the best method of Mission.

The presence of Christ in the communicants, and the continued abiding of Christ within them by asceticism is the essential way of confessing Christ.

A Christian community can only proclaim the Gospel--and be heard--if it is a living icon of Christ.

The equality of the brothers and the freedom in the Spirit, experienced in the Liturgy, should normally be expressed and continued in economic sharing and liberation in the field of social oppression.

In the Eucharistic liturgy, the Church remains a praying community; invoking the Holy Spirit, she introduces the presence of God in a personal context.

3. Indigenization

Through the Liturgy, Christian faith penetrates into the very depth of the life of the people. This presupposes that the language, the music, the icons and the patterns of thought used in the Liturgy be created by the communities deeply rooted, both in the living Tradition of the Church and in the life of contemporary people. The marriage of Orthodox identity with local cultures in such a way that the latter be transfigured by the former is a long and difficult process.

Neither can foreign languages and forms of expression used by ancient Orthodox people be imposed upon indigenous Orthodox communities, nor can profane forms of expression of non-Orthodox people be indiscriminately introduced into the liturgy. Though new languages (Polish, Finnish, Hindi, French, English, etc.) new petitions in the litanies corresponding to new needs, new music, new vocabularies and patterns of thought must gradually be used, this creation is only possible in so far as the new communities simultaneously progress in the understanding of Orthodox Tradition.

Liturgical creation must never be accomplished at the expense of fidelity to authentic Tradition; and fidelity to authentic Tradition implies the liberty necessary to a real incarnation of the Faith into indigenous civilization, which nevertheless can only be integrated into the liturgy by converted hearts who transfigure the given culture.

4. Liturgy and Unity

In the Liturgy, we all by participating in the One Bread and One Chalice 'ask' to be united in the communion of the One Holy Spirit (Lit. St. Basil) standing before the One Holy Table led by one Bishop, we pray together as brothers of Christ to our common Father

Our distinct persons, united by love, confess with one mind the Unity of the Three Divine Persons, Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, consubstantial and indivisible Trinity.

United in One Christ, Suffering Servant and Lord of the World, we should then go out to the world to express our unity by the humble and loving service to the world, in order to bear witness of the Resurrection and Lordship of the Saviour of the world, and to manifest by our detachment from the desires and vanities of the world our attachment to the Heavenly Jerusalem contemplated in the Divine Liturgy.

Report No. 4: The Evangelistic Witness of Orthodoxy Today

1. What is the Evangelistic Witness?

a) The Evangelistic Witness is not the whole Mission of the Church. It has many other dimensions. Evangelistic Witness is understood to be restricted to the communication of Christ to those who do not consider themselves Christian, wherever these people may be found. This includes the need of the Church to witness to some of its own nominal members.

b) Evangelistic Witness is a call to salvation, which means the restoration of the relationship of God and Man, as understood in the Orthodox Christian teaching of Theosis. This message has its source in the Scriptures which witness to the redemption of mankind in Christ Jesus, yet it also includes a world-view which locates man vis-à-vis God, his fellow-man as individual and society, as well as his own personhood and destiny. It includes both the God and Man relationship and the Human Being to fellow Human Being (horizontal, vertical) relationship.

c) By its nature, however, Evangelistic Witness is first of all and primarily a confrontation of Man by the message, judgement, love, presence, redemption, command and transfiguring power of the energies of the One Holy and Undivided Trinity.

d) Evangelistic Witness brings to Man the true response to his essential need qua Human Being. It is the bringing of the Divine Response to the real need of persons as individuals and of persons in community. It is the message of human restoration and the divinization of the human. As such it speaks to the most profound human need, yet it also meets and overcomes the felt needs of human beings in more specific and concrete dimensions.

e) Because Man is fallen, the Evangelistic Witness will also appear to him to have an element of foolishness (moria) and will always contain within it an element of 'skandalon' simply because the wisdom of Man cannot fully comprehend the transcendent wisdom of God. Yet, the Evangelistic Witness does more than provide a message of divine dimensions; it also conveys a way of living applicable in full within the community of the body of believers, the Church, and in part in the world at large.

2. Why are we required to make Evangelistic Witness?

a) We do not have the option of keeping the Good News to ourselves. Sharing the Word and Communicating the Word and Confessing the Faith once given to the Saints is an integral part of fulfilling the image and likeness of God and the achievement of Theosis. Like St. Paul the believer must be able to say about all who do not know the life in Christ what he said about his fellow-countrymen: 'My heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved' (Romans 10:1). The uncommunicated Gospel (Good News) is a patent contradiction.

b) The goal of Evangelistic Witness--though it may pass through many stages and pause at many intermediate places--is finally one: conversion from a life characterized by sin, separation from God, submission to evil and the unfulfilled potential of God's image to a new life characterized by the forgiveness of sins, obedience to the commands of God, renewed fellowship with God in Trinity, growth in the restoration of the divine image and the realization among us of the prototype of the love of Christ. More briefly and succinctly put, the final goal of Evangelistic Witness is conversion and baptism. Conversion is a wilful turning from sin, death and evil to true life in God. Baptism is the reception of a new member into the new life of the community of God's people, the Church.

c) Though the conversion and baptism of all is the final goal of Evangelistic Witness, there is a need to identify many intermediate goals also. The increase of love among Christians and non-Christians, entry into dialogue and brotherly conversation, the formation of the Gospel message into the language and thought-forms of the non-Christian neighbour, the interpenetration of the structures of society, the promulgation of the will of God in reference to injustice among us and the prophetic challenge to the world's values share in the task of Evangelistic Witness and in part serve as a motive to speak the word of Christ to all men.

3. In what manner do we make our Evangelistic Witness?

a) It is the task of Evangelistic Witness to lead persons to the acknowledgement of God's saving power in their lives. 'He is Lord of all and bestows his riches upon all who call upon Him'. Yet, 'how are men to call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in Him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? And how can men preach unless they are sent?' (Romans 10:12, 14-15). After two thousand years this Pauline injunction retains its urgency and its timeliness.

b) Yet those same intervening years require of us a review of our conceptions of the methods of Evangelistic Witness. On the one hand it is clear that the proclamation alone is not the only way in which the Evangelistic Witness is made. Further, in this day and age mere preaching may no longer be the most effective way of Evangelistic Witness. Paul does not tell us what we are to do when the Gospel has been proclaimed and rejected, or even worse, simply ignored! Yet, of one thing we are sure. We are sent by Christ to bear witness to Him and His saving truth for all of mankind.

- c) How is it to be done today? In the first instance this question must be directed to the attitudes and motives of 'those who are sent'. Those who are sent must be first conscious of their own repentance, conversion and salvation. Those who are fully aware of the new life of Grace in the community of the Holy Trinity and in the reality of the Community of the Church alone are able to communicate the saving witness. This above all comes about with the knowledge that nothing we do is of effect without the energizing power of the Trinity. No matter what it is that we do in Evangelistic Witness we know that it is 'God making His appeal through us' (2 Corinthians 5:20).
- d) As difficult and beyond our capabilities as the work of Evangelistic Witness may seem, then, we undertake the task with the spirit not of fear or of inadequacy or of insufficiency--though all these in truth exist in us--but with hope that through our meager efforts it may be stored up and empowered by the gracious energies of the Triune God in whose name we undertake the task.
- e) And so it is that 'those who are sent' to be Evangelistic Witnesses do so as ones having experienced the redemption of God and who then work with the full understanding of their own insufficiency, fully expecting the grace of God to 'provide the growth'. Thus it is in a constant spirit of 'metanoia' (repentance), with a full sense of our own limitations that we make our Evangelistic Witness.
- f) How is this Evangelistic Witness to be made today objectively? The chief means of witness for the Church today is not the bold announcement of Christ as Saviour to a world which has already heard the words and still remains unresponsive. The first and chief method of Evangelical Witness is the same as that of the early Church. Pagans saw the quality of life of those early believers and were so attracted by its power and beauty that they sought to find its power and its source, (e.g. Epistle of Diognetus; Libanus' praise of Chrysostom's mother).
- g) The first method of Evangelistic Witness is the sharing of love by those who have acknowledged the love of God for them. 'We love because He first loved us'. (1 John 4:19) It was an injunction to Evangelistic Witness when the Apostle of Love instructed: 'Beloved let us love one another; for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God' (1 John 4:7).
- h) More specifically the same Apostle says: 'This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. . .this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith' (1 John 5:3-4). Our obedience to His will is equally a powerful form of Evangelistic Witness. We have cheapened the Gospel in the past by much talking and little practice. Our obedience to God's will must now be the vehicle for our message.
- i) Though the Divine Liturgy is essentially and primarily the realization of the union of the Church with Christ, and as such is in and of itself a manifestation of the reality of the Church, it may have consequences for the Evangelistic Witness of the Church. From all parts of the world we bring witness to the transforming and evangelizing power of the Divine Liturgy.
- j) Evangelistic Witness wherever possible must be made to the un-churched. But this witness must be understood in the broadest manner. Certainly, it will include personal

witnessing of the power of God in the individual life of the believer. The stories of the Saints, the synaxaria, and the writings of the Fathers encourage the living Christian to speak of the power of the Holy Spirit in his or her own life.

k) But the word of God cannot be contained only in the personal sphere. The Evangelical Witness must also be made before the social and the political tribunal. Christians must speak the Word of God to contemporary issues of justice with all available means. The Evangelical Witness will keep a vigilant eye upon all emergent social movements and concerns (women's liberation, racial consciousness, sexual freedom, demonology, etc.) to speak the word of Truth. But it will seek to do its task of evangelization toward and in these phenomena not by parroting words of another age, but by reformulating the unchanging Truth with an eye to its contemporization. Certainly, in doing this it will also respond creatively in the patristic spirit to the ever-new and ever-changing phenomena of our times.

l) This it will do in the honoured spirit of the indigenization of the Orthodox Faith in reference to national cultures. Orthodoxy is proud of its foreign missionary tradition which has not been carried out in a spirit of colonialism, but rather with the intent of adapting the faith to the manners, language, traditions and life-styles of the people to whom it brings the Gospel. Wherever Orthodoxy is now active in such mission it must retain and expand that method.

m) At this time in our history, however, most Orthodox Churches find it very difficult to speak of foreign missions. It certainly is not a live option for many of the national Orthodox Churches. Their duty remains primarily within the Churches and the nations in which they find themselves. Yet, other Orthodox Churches are to be challenged for having both the opportunity and the resources, and not responding to the charge 'Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you' (Matthew 28:19). The same may be said in reference to inter-Orthodox assistance, especially to the newer Orthodox in Africa, Alaska and the Far East.

4. For Whom is the Evangelistic Witness?

a) The preceding section implies the answer to the title question of this section. Yet perhaps it would be good to articulate it. It would be true to say that the Evangelistic Witness is directed towards all of the ktisis which groans and travails in search of adoption and redemption (Romans 8:22). But what, specifically, does this mean?

b) In the first case the Church's Evangelistic Witness is for the Christian who is not a Christian. There are many who have been baptized, and yet have put off Christ, either deliberately or through indifference. Often such people still find it possible sociologically or culturally or ethnically to relate in some manner to the Christian Community. The re-Christianization of Christians is an important task of the Church's Evangelistic Witness

c) The Evangelistic Witness is, consequently, also directed to those who superficially identify Orthodox Christianity with their national culture. We cannot be content with a process of indigenization which leaves much of our national and cultural lives untouched by the spirit of the Gospel. The transfiguring power of the Holy Trinity is meant to reach into every nook and cranny of our national life. Those who live in or come from the traditional Orthodox lands are especially sensitive to this challenge of Evangelistic Witness.

d) The Evangelistic Witness will also speak to the structures of this world; its economic, political, and societal institutions. Especially necessary is the witness of social justice in the name of the poor and the oppressed. We must re-learn the patristic lesson that the Church is the mouth and voice of the poor and oppressed in the presence of the powers that be. In our own way we must learn once again 'how to speak to the ear of the King', on the people's behalf.

e) Finally, the Evangelistic Witness is directed to the new secularized man in an even more secularized world. The forces of technology, scientific success and control over the environment have provided mankind with an enviable control over the conditions of his life. Yet that control has had many undesirable consequences, also. It has taught man to think of himself as fully sufficient; he now conceives of himself primarily as consumer; he is homo-economicus; his circumscribed goals of life require no transcendent referent, no forgiveness, no restoration of relationship, no sacramental life, no theosis, no God. Yet, exactly because he sits in that darkness, he is the object of the Church's Evangelistic Witness.

5. Who Performs the Task of Evangelistic Witness?

a) The most true and profound response to this question would be that it is God, through the power of the Holy Spirit which does the work of Evangelical Witness. We are made 'diakonoi' of the Gospel 'according to the gift of God's grace which was given (us) by the working of His power' (Ephesians 3:7). In a further sense, it is the whole Community of God which does this work. For it is 'through the Church' that 'the manifold wisdom of God (is now made known to the principalities and powers)' (Ephesians 3:10).

b) More particularly, three groups or classes of Christians are charged, each in their own way with the task of Evangelical Witness. First are those ordained to the Lord's service. The chief evangelizer of the Church is the Bishop with his presbyterium and diaconate as well as the monastic establishment. In the history of the Church, these 'professionals of Evangelical Witness have carried on the work for the Church with great success. And inasmuch as they still lead the conduct of worship, preach the Word of God, visit the oppressed and suffering, speak the word of truth in the tribunals of power, proclaim the Gospel before vast audiences electronically present, communicate the Orthodox truth through the printed word, or walk the foreign mission trails, they continue to do so. Yet, we are all too conscious of our lethargy and deafness to the divine commission. Theological schools of all levels are challenged to heal that deafness through proper and full education for Evangelical Witness of the candidates for Holy Orders. There is need to restore the claim of Evangelical Witness upon the priestly conscience of the servants of God.

c) The second group specifically charged with the work of Evangelical Witness is the laity. We have just re-discovered the theology of the laity in the Orthodox Church. They are part of the 'royal priesthood' of the Church. We are all--clergy and laity--called to be 'a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Christ' (1 Peter 2:5). As such, we are all 'a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people'. Thus, the laity shares in the whole work of the Church, including that of Evangelistic Witness. Part of the task of the clergy is to 'raise the consciousness' of the laity regarding their roles in the fulfillment of the work of the Church. As we have noted, the primary means of Evangelical Witness today is the authentic Christian life to which

every lay-person is called. So also is the vital and living participation in the Divine Liturgy, the personal witness of faith, the Christian involvement of the believer in the social, political, educational, cultural and intellectual life of his nation and society. Orthodoxy of doctrine, combined with evangelical behaviour are the conditions of true Evangelical Witness by the laity.

d) Then there are those among us called against our will to mission. Some of us become Evangelical Witnesses suddenly when the principalities and powers of the age force us into situations of martyrdom, when compromise and accommodation are not possible. Today, the ancient experience of expropriation, prison and arena is frequently repeated. When called, we must be ready for the special witness of martyrdom. Others of us are called from among the members of the Body of Christ to Evangelical Witness because of the special gifts of the Holy Spirit. Throughout the ages persons have been touched by the Holy Spirit and provided with gifts of unique character. These persons may do the work of Evangelistic Witness. However, it is incumbent upon them to do so always from within the faith and truth of the body of the Church. In turn, the Church must look upon these brethren seized of the Holy Spirit with the wisdom of Gamaliel.

e) The difficult and thorny question of the renewal of Foreign Mission by the Church cannot be met or solved by anyone of the particular Orthodox Churches. We cannot deny the goal. Yet, a unified and organized Orthodox approach is needed, lest we harm and do disservice to our fellow Orthodox. It certainly is an important element in our understanding of our total mission in the world today, from a Pan-Orthodox perspective. Part of our mission is also to protect and preserve Orthodoxy where it is found today. An honest recognition of our limitations and existential restrictions is also required.

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* NEWS FROM AND FOR THE GENERALATES
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* Fr. Yves PERIGNY OMI has been appointed Executive Secretary of the Pastoral Institute
* St Paul's University, OTTAWA. The appointment is effective as from June 1, 1975.
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A THEOLOGY OF LIBERATIONTHE LIBERATING ACTION OF CHRISTIANS AS THE PROPER BASIS FOR A SOCIALPASTORAL THEOLOGY by Arnold Zenteno, S.J.Introduction

From the beginning it will be well to speak of a liberating action on behalf of Christians instead of social-pastoral activity. The reason is that the term social-pastoral would seem to refer to just one particular section of the Church. I believe that every action of Christians should be seriously committed to our world, and in order to be so, should be based theoretically and existentially, upon a coherent theology with its corresponding practice.

This type of theology has been called "The Signs of the Times" or a "Theology of Happenings," and it has its fundamental inspiration in methodology from Gaudium et Spes, the Documents of Medellin (the Catholic Hierarchy in Columbia), and from the understanding of the prophetic mission of the Church. This particular theology has been evolved, especially in Latin America, from the experience and life lived in these countries today, and is interpreted as a challenge to the faith of Christians. It is an experience of oppression and dependence, but it is also a spirit of willing change, of hope of liberation, as well as an earnest commitment to the poor and oppressed people.

In Europe, they have talked very much about political theory, i.e., considering our faith not as something private but as a public act of salvation, and they have talked about a Theology of Development. But in Latin America, thinkers have elaborated a Theology of Liberation, which is the fruit of experience in our Church. Very many Christians see now, in an enlightened way, their commitment on behalf of a faith which interprets Latin America reality as a sin situation and, therefore, a negation of God's plan, and of a faith which brings us to a liberating movement, telling Our Lord that we will make our own his history, the History of Salvation.

The Theology of Development and Underdevelopment belongs to the creationist line of thought admitting the duality of grace and nature but such a theology does not really express the reality upon which we would like to reflect, ----- theologically. The idea of development is already full of economics, as well as an image of the developed country as an "ideal" but this does not express the causes of underdevelopment, namely Sin and Oppression; nor does it express the explicit or implicit values of Power, Exploitation and Lucrativeness.

The Theology of Liberation and Oppression shows much more adequately our world situation social realities: i.e., dependency, oppression, and liberation, and is, therefore, more akin to the essence of the message of Revelation. Such a Theology does not negate, but assumes and integrates the categories of development and marginality.

The basic premise of this Theology is as follows: Salvation is based solely on Christ, who wants and realizes the total liberation of mankind. He wishes to save the whole of

mankind who have made this world of Oppression and Sin. This hope of liberation remains in Christ's Spirit (Galatians 5.13 and Luke 4.18), whose sign is the Church, which itself is the Sacrament of Salvation. In this context we find four key points and a fundamental theory:

1. Total liberation in Christ;
2. The Church, the Sacrament of Salvation;
3. Our social situation as Sin; and
4. Eschatology as the dynamics of history as well as the critical consciousness of this social situation.

The fundamental theory is the Easter Story, the Passing of God which saves us and liberates us, a parallel of the passing from less human conditions (such as misery and opulence, oppressing structures and egotism) to more human conditions (such as the way from fulfillment of material needs to the gifts of faith and love). In the following paragraphs we will expand a series of theological theses which, we think, constitute the basis of Christian action for those who are willing to commit themselves more and more to transforming society.

Some Theological Guidelines for the Pastoral Social Action:

A. General Presuppositions:

- 1) Christ is the Center, the Alpha and Omega. Everything has been made in Him and for Him. Everything is recapitulated and reconciled in Him, Who is the New Man for the glory of God the Father.
- 2) There are not two orders of reality --- the natural and supernatural, nor the orders of creation and salvation, but only one order, the existential order of Christ.
- 3) The criterion of salvation for all men is Love. (Matthew 25) This is set in contrast to the ideas that one can obtain salvation only through the Church, or with the support of the Church, or with an explicit knowledge of the providence of a personal God.
- 4) The Church is the Sacrament of Salvation. It exists for mankind. It is not "non-world" but is the explicit sign of the grace of God, and as such is alive, efficient and a saving presence. This, of course, contradicts the notion of a purely juridical Church. Furthermore, the idea of the Church as the Sacrament of Salvation is far more adequate than the metaphor of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ or People of God. This idea of ours does not deny the foregoing metaphors; it includes them and shows the Church as the Servant of Mankind (Gaudium et Spes, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World).
- 5) The World is not so much the theater of life as mankind itself. Therefore, all authentic human life is life in Christ (even if such a life might be called on many occasions an anonymous Christian life: see # 2).

- 6) With regard to temporal matters, the Church respects the autonomy of nature's law as well as its dynamics, but at the same time recognizes that nothing can be neutral in respect to God in the person of Christ. Such is the humanism to the transcendency of things of which the encyclical Populorum Progressio speaks. Temporal things are not subordinated to the visible Church, as everything is already pre-ordained in Christ.
- 7) Eschatology is not just something which comes after history. Communion between God and man exists now in history and is the key to history although not as yet in its fullness. All which we saw in Truth, Love, and Justice, we will find renewed in the fullness of the Kingdom of God.
- 8) Sin is not a mere interior or individual reality. Sin has an essential social dimension, because it implies an offense to other human beings, having consequences for them because of our not "growing up" in Christ (see # 3).
- 9) Creation and Salvation are essentially a community or family happening (that is against individualism, privatism, etc...).
- 10) Christianity is not, primarily, a doctrine but a life. It makes no sense to be a Christian if we do not live as Christians. (Not all those who say "Lord, Lord" will be fit for the Kingdom of Heaven). Orthodoxy is not sufficient: there must also be Ortho-practice.
- 11) Social life is not just an appendix, but is an essential dimension of the Gospel, the Good News of Salvation for all. In summary, the Easter Story means that God has fully implemented salvation in Christ, a salvation which is the complete liberation of mankind, a task which has been assigned to man.

B. Some Theological Criteria which are considered to be false or inadequate, impeding the true liberating pastoral work of man and society:

- 1) Many times men think of God as a distant judge.
- 2) Faith is thought as an acceptance of truth or as a transmission of a deposit of truth, not as a personal commitment.
- 3) Salvation is thought of as a personal matter, with references to the future world and with this comes the implication that salvation is obtained by certain rites ' opere operato,' i.e., without a personal action.
- 4) There is a lack of consciousness about Christ acting in all of us.
- 5) It is believed that the Church is formed by the Hierarchy and that the faithful are here only to obey.
- 6) The prophetic mission of the Church is thought of as completely alien to a temporal commitment.

- 7) Temporal matters are completely subordinated to spiritual matters.
- 8) It is thought that the Church and the World are two totally different realities; the Church dealing with the spiritual, and the rest with the temporal. In state matters, the Church should only supplement whatever civil society can do.

C. Some Basic Criteria for Pastoral Social Action - Theological criteria leading towards a committed pastoral action of the Church on behalf of human liberation and the promotion of man and society:

- 1) God, who creates man in His Own Image (Genesis) is the same liberating God (Go-E1) of Exodus. He liberates man from slavery, idolatry and unfaithfulness.
- 2) This same God created the world, and all its benefits for the use of mankind so that all should share these in a proper manner (Gaudium et Spes, 1.29), contrary to the individual idea of private property.
- 3) The same God sent His incarnate Son to liberate all men from the slavery which Sin subjected them; hunger, misery, oppression, and ignorance; in a word, the injustice which has its origin in human egotism.
- 4) God ordains that the social order is not a special benefit, nor a benefit for minorities, nor for the advancement of special groups of people, This order must be realized every day, based upon truth, sustained by justice and enlivened by love.
- 5) Historical reality gives us concrete facts of anti-evangelical phenomena of excessive inequalities in all orders, contrary to love, social justice, human dignity and true peace. Misery, which afflicts the majority of people and is the almost universal experience of frustration of legitimate aspirations, is the most serious injustice which raises its voice to heaven.
- 6) Such a situation as injustice, of institutionalized violence (which is a permanent violation of the fundamental rights of the majority of people) expresses a Sin situation. This is a true crystallization of sin in these matters.
- 7) Underdevelopment is not juxtaposed with development; it is the effect of oppression, dependency, and unjust colonialism (both internal and external), demanding a true liberation of man.
- 8) Injustice not only refers to the lack of participation in fundamental benefits, but also - and more particularly - to the lack of participation in the decision-making process affecting people (by neither allowing them to be agents in their best interests, nor to take an active participation). Participation in fundamental benefits and in decision-making is an alienable right which emerges from man's dignity, not from mere theoretical speculation, and should form the history of man.

- 9) From what we have just stated (5-8), there exists an unjust situation which expresses a Sin situation from which God wishes us to be converted. This demands a profound conversion which should lead us to a new life like new men really committed to a total, audacious and urgently profound change of all human structures (social, economic, political, and religious). It is a false dilemma to speak about conversion versus change of structures, for there is no true conversion which does not lead naturally to change; there are no new structures without change.
- 10) Following on what was said in 3, in the light of Christ, all the divine work in the history of salvation is a promotional action, humanly liberating, which has love as its one motive (Document on Justice, #4). Therefore, evangelization and civilization are somethings more than mere endeavors; they are the double aspects of one and the same salvation impulse (Mexican Bishops on Social Development). Because of this, we say the social happening is an essential dimension of the Gospel. We could also say that this social happening is an essential dimension of the triple ministry of the Church, prophetic, liturgic, and pedagogic.
- 11) Since peace is to be built on justice and love, the indispensable way of promoting such peace is by a profound change of structures.
- 12) We can, therefore, propose a goal that every action of ours should be the liberation of man from every form of servitude which might oppress him. This goal is reached through the Church apostolate or through specialized social pastoral activities (as among workers and peasants, etc...). Yet, at the same time, that is, through established ministries of the Church such as preaching, celebrating liturgies and teaching.
- 13) Being men of hope (Eschatology) should not make us passive, but it should enliven our conscience and the exigencies of being a new man. And it should give us a critical conscience so that we are not "established" in a particular social regime.
- 14) In the spirit of the Documents of Medellin, we notice how these are indispensable tasks in Latin America today; political commitments, the informing of the conscience and organization of the people (by themselves) as well as a prophetic announcing and denouncing.

CONCLUSION

In the last Synod, the Church was asked about its mission and its endeavors for the promotion of justice in the world. The final document of the Synod expresses the bishops' findings in looking at the signs of the times in our world, plagued by serious injustices, domination and oppression. The Church sees also the hopes and aspirations of the liberation of the majority of people. (Introduction to Synod Document on Justice). In these words we have tried to express a coherent theological vision relating to the spirit of the Synod and to the hopes of its Document.

We would like to conclude with the words of the same document by reaffirming that the Church's vocation is to be present in the heart of the world, to preach the Good News to the poor, to liberate the oppressed and to give joy to the afflicted (see Introduction). Therefore, this vision which we have presented, although it points to those serious injustices which contradict the plan of God in Christ, is a vision of hope because of the dynamism of the Gospel; which is found in man and which will work toward salvation and liberation fully in Christ. Therefore, this vision is already a commitment for action and is a desire to live with a goal for every action of ours - the liberation of men, particular those millions of brothers who suffer injustice. Without this commitment, our theology would be completely alienated and alienating.

BOOK REVIEW

EVANGELIZATION (DOCUMENTA MISSIONALIA 9) GREGORIAN UNIVERSITY, ROME 1975. 404 pp. Lit.120

When the Third Synod of Bishops gathered in 1975 taking up the theme of evangelization in the world today, they tackled a problem that is central to the existence of the mission of the Church. The trends emerging from the Synodal discussions led to a deeper study of mandate which the Church received from Christ to evangelize all men: 15 studies on this topic are presented in this book.

Fr. Carlo Martini researches the biblical vocabulary of "Announcing" the word of God. Fr. D. Grasso examines the meaning of the term "evangelization" from the time of the Vatican II up to the Bishop's Synod in 1974. Frs. M. Flick and Z. Alszeghy study the question of evangelisation and the sacraments, with tempting insights into the "hour of grace" and the salvation of "anonymous" Christians or non-believers. Fr. Robert Faricy considers the object of evangelization in terms of the processes of the spiritual life. Fr. Latourelle studies the theme of testimony and its decisive role in Christian life. Fr. J. Lopez-Gay studies the missiological concept of evangelisation. Fr. J. Witte writes on ecumenism and the "catholicity" of the Church. Fr. M. Dhavamony inquires into the nature and scope of inter-religious dialogue. Fr. J. Carroll presents economic development as one aspect of a much broader process of "rationalization". Fr. H. Carrier asks why the Church needs Universities. Fr. J. Shih deals with the evangelization of China today. Fr. J. Lotz elaborates the formal and material conditions of evangelisation. Fr. J. de Finance deals with contemporary non-Marxist atheism in relation to evangelization. Fr. G. Vetter deals with the problem of evangelization in the Marxist milieu. The book, far from claiming to be exhaustive, is presented as a contribution to the topic which constitutes the "raison d'être" of the Church itself; but coming from such qualified scholars it is a valuable contribution indeed.

DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

A meeting of the Development Working Group was held on 25 March 1975 at the Sedos Secretariat.

<u>Present:</u>	Sr. M. H. de Toledo	C.S.A.	Sr. J. Burke	S.N.D.N.
	Sr. M. Motte	F.M.M.	Sr. M. D. McGonagle	S.S.N.D.
	Sr. M. T. Hahnenfeld	O.S.U.	Fr. C. Ruhling	S.V.D.
	Sr. C. Ouellette	S.C.M.H.-M.		

Secretariat: Fr. B. Tonna

Chairman: Sr. Danita McGonagle, S.S.N.D.

1. Sister Danita and Sr. Mary Motte presented to the group drafts of the questionnaire and covering letter which would be sent to Cameroon, Guatemala and Thailand. These were examined and amended (see final versions attached). The group then examined lists of potential respondents. It reconsidered its previous decision to attach these lists to each questionnaire and agreed to revoke it, in order to leave respondents more leeway. The group asked the Secretariat to translate the drafts into French and Spanish and to send them to the selected addresses before the Easter break. It was agreed that a reminder would be sent after mid-May and that a dialogue would be initiated with each interested respondent.
2. Sr. Catherine then communicated to the group her findings about the Cameroon. A complex ethnic picture emerged, as the population of about six million struggles with 136 languages in the West and with 100 in the East. The Bamileke tend to be the more dynamic of the various groups, as they emigrate from their fertile but overpopulated territory to the urban areas. A good number of them had followed the leftist Union Populaire before and after independence--and found themselves in the "opposition" in a party state with an African socialist ideology. The country is oriented towards agriculture. The second five year plan stresses its diversification. Industry is being encouraged. Most of the foreign aid comes from France. A great deal of detailed information on the Cameroon is available in the Documentation Section of the Secretariat.
3. The group agreed to meet again on 17 April 1975, at 4:00 p.m. at the Secretariat.
4. See also APPENDIX A: Covering Letter and APPENDIX B: Questionnaire.

APPENDIX A: COVERING LETTER

Dear Father/Brother/Sister:

This letter and the accompanying questionnaire are being sent to you by the Development Working Group of SEDOS, which is a grouping of Generalates of missionary-sending Institutes, who have come together to work more closely and thus ensure a more efficient service to the Church in her missionary task. The Generalate of your Institute belongs to this group.

The Group seeks to follow up the insights of the recent Synod of Bishops concerning human development, liberation and associated topics such as social justice. We aim in particular at identifying the current concerns of the Christians of Asia, Latin America and Africa (including missionaries) as regards one particular aspect of the intimate connection between evangelization and liberation: the basic values as these are perceived and expressed by those involved in a specific culture. These values we (with the Synod) consider to be faith, charity, justice, liberation (or freedom) and universal brotherhood (or solidarity).

You are one of a small number of people who have been selected from a sample of three countries--Thailand, Cameroon, and Guatemala, and hence we are writing to you personally in the hope that you will be so good as to help us in our investigation by answering the enclosed questionnaire. For our part we undertake to forward to you, as soon as they are completed, the results of our joint effort--for a joint effort it must be, since we realize how dependent we are on the assistance and information you can give us. At the moment we are asking the question, but if we can answer any questions that come to your mind we shall be glad to do so.

You may answer the questionnaire personally if you wish, but if you prefer to consult with others and send a joint reply it will be very welcome. However, we would urge that your reply should be sent in time to reach us here in Rome before the end of May (postal systems here and in your area permitting!).

We are sure you will agree that a study of this nature will be of great benefit to missionaries in the field and to the Generalates staffs here in Rome.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

B. Tonna
Executive Secretary

Enclosure

